

**Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency
Interoperable Communications Meeting**

Friday, June 6, 2014

**Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency, 645 New London Avenue,
Cranston, Rhode Island 02920**

In attendance:

Jamia R. McDonald, Executive Director RIEMA
Sid Wordell, Police Chief's Association
David Schnell, Lifespan
Joseph Del Guidice, Prov. Communications
RI Department of Health – not present
RI DoIt – not present
RI State Police – not present
Joe Baker, RIDOT
RIPTA – not present
Brian Glancy, Rep. appointed by RIEMA
RISCON North - not present
RISCON South - not present
Hospital Assoc. of RI – not present
RI Bridge & Turnpike Authority – not present
Gina Caroulo, RI Dept. of Corrections
Narragansett Indian Tribe – not present
Frank Floor, RIDEM
Ron Doire, RI Association of Fire Chiefs

Guests:

John Washburn, RIEMA
Gil Woodside, RIEMA
Armand Randolph, RIEMA
RI 911 – not present
Peter Ginaitt, RI Lifespan
Brian Swann, Motorola
Ron Provost, Motorola
Ralph Nahigian, No. Prov. Fire

Others: All captured on sign-in sheet (attached).

Executive Director, Jamia R. McDonald, called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

After roll call, Executive Director McDonald noted that there was no quorum present; however, the meeting went forward with no voting taking place. The minutes of the previous meeting on April 7, 2014, were not available for reading and therefore not approved.

Executive Director McDonald focused on the agenda, stating they would be reviewing the progress report on the database that developed for Rhode Island State Communications Network, including the PowerPoint slide for the rollout to the larger groups, discussion on SOPs with neighboring states (including issues encountered), use of our SOPs for part-time users, radio equipment, audits, subcommittee reports, and grants.

Database:

Executive Director McDonald stated that the vendor has been to the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA) and over the last six (6) months RIEMA has been collecting information on the system. A database has been built that outlines every piece of equipment, as well as tracks usage in order to cost it out, so when different pieces of equipment are used or when things go down, the impact on our budget can be tracked down to the penny.

(While the presentation was being set up) Executive Director McDonald noted that last night the House Finance Committee passed the Sub A, so it will go to the floor next Thursday for a full vote. RIEMA is

officially separated from the National Guard. Executive Director McDonald stated she will keep the committee posted on what the budget play-out will be. There were no questions about this topic.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP):

Executive Director McDonald stated that through an audit of the system, it was discovered that without RIEMA being notified, some of the local police departments had been handing their radios off to partner jurisdictions that they were doing tactical work with. This means that some of these municipalities had access to some of the encrypted lines, channels, and had our actual radios. Therefore, Tom Guthlien (RIEMA), has taken the lead on this and meeting with the local police departments and establishing and enforcing our SCIP protocols and SOPs. If they are going to do that, they are requiring that the other states purchase the equipment and maintain the equipment and that any channels existing on those radios get formal permission from whomever owns those channels. There was a brief discussion as to the Colonel having signed MOUs with those jurisdictions authorizing them access to the channels. Sid Wordell (Police Chief's Association) noted that the fire departments were also sharing radios with other jurisdictions. Executive Director McDonald went on to state she may want to talk to police and fire representatives about these scenarios and fixes because some of it is falling within the SOPs and some is new policy that had not been contemplated as occurring and needing to refine the process. Further discussion ensued as to remedies.

Executive Director McDonald noted that the Health Department allowed us to use them for an audit to test our internal protocols and we found a couple of gaps. The Health Department has the most up-to-date SOPs and they had not yet adapted them to SCIP and their new SOPs and are still working on updating them. It was stated that due to this issue, all of the code plugs had to be redone. Gil Woodside (RIEMA) went on to explain the code plug rewrite process and it was agreed by that this subject should be held as a future meeting item for lessons learned. Peter Ginaitt (Lifespan) asked about the different code plugs. Gil Woodside (RIEMA) explained there are different plug codes for every hospital, every nursing home, cash radios, etc. and the user needs. Executive Director McDonald stated she was going to put this on a future agenda to do a read-out.

John Washburn (RIEMA) presented the information pertaining to the database that was developed, including a brief background. He went on to state that EA Engineering was contracted through and paid by the Department of Administration, to assist. It was noted that not only is the Motorola maintenance service contract in place, there are also service contracts which include generator repairs, HVAC repair, and working on property will be next. John Washburn (RIEMA) and Gil Woodside (RIEMA) reviewed the database and the different processes of and how to use the database. Peter Ginaitt (LifeSpan) questioned if there is something that the communities or privates can do for their radios. A discussion took place as to how this database was customized for RIEMA. Peter Ginaitt (LifeSpan) went on to explain what advantages there would be to be able to utilize this type of database. Executive Director McDonald added that the scope of this contract did not include a module for the locals, but because it is built, she is open to the conversation with EA Engineering about piggy-back opportunities for others.

Ralph Nahigian (North Providence) shared the fact that North Providence has a similar process (log-in) and further inquired if they were to report something by phone, are they going to take our email address so they see the status changes? Gil Woodside (RIEMA) indicated that only the people here will be able to see the status changes. Ralph Nahigian (North Providence) further questioned how they would know when something has been completed. It was noted that this issue is being addressed, but they did not have that capability as yet.

Executive Director McDonald stated that part of this program also tracks costs. She went on to say RIEMA was asked to support the air show for the National Guard, and as we get better at special events, she would like to track costs for not only our agency, but for other state agencies. This would provide the ability to cost out what the time, staff, and equipment would be when supporting special events. Therefore, when RIEMA is asked to support private events (not state-level events), we will be able to provide them the amount of costs to be refunded in order to support their event.

Sid Wordell (Police Chief's Association) questioned whether there would be an eye towards the cost assessment down the line. Executive Director McDonald indicated RIEMA has been fully funded in our budget, however, she was not sure what capital side looked like. She also stated that she does not see how we can fairly come up with a cost model until RIEMA is completely responsible for this system. The leverage of expenses and the possible slow migration of expenses to better determine a cost model was further discussed. Executive Director McDonald did note she believes that is a three (3) year out conversation.

Executive Director McDonald indicated that although Tom Guthlien (RIEMA) was not present, she wanted to turn the conversation to broadband. She went on to explain that with respect to FirstNet, although feeling as though it would never happen and the money would be spent without realizing the implementation, Rhode Island was the first state scheduled for a consultation (June 19, 2014). She is hopeful that if awarded \$2,000,000/\$3,000,000, which further hardens the infrastructure, absorbs the cost, and prevents any fee-for-use down the line. Sid Wordell (Police Chief's Association) stated that outside of the discussion about contracts for servicing sites, what about fuel? John Washburn (RIEMA) explained that they have been using MPA vendors, further stating their biggest problem at this point is propane. He further noted that one of the goals that were put into their budget was to replace generators that are using propane. He went on to explain that one of the issues Tom Guthlien (RIEMA) was researching is the broadband initiatives correcting its fibers for all sites as to connectivity. It was confirmed that the objective was less utilization of the Verizons and Sprints and sustain our own 700 MHz broadband system, it being organized and the most cleanly accessible system.

New Business: Sub-Committee Reports

Technical – Brian Glancy (RIEMA) noted that they have met three (3) times since the last meeting and have gone in a couple of different directions. He further stated that Tom Guthlien (RIEMA) brought to their attention his concerns over the issues with the sub-microwave sites being of different manufacturers and the need to address this issue. Brian Glancy (RIEMA) went on to discuss the possible solutions to this issue, including how this would work and where replacement parts could be obtained. Further, Jack Landers (RI DoIt), Tony Lupinacci (RI DoIt), and others put documentation together for Tom Guthlien (RIEMA) summarizing this information. Jack Landers (RI DoIt) (through Brian Glancy (RIEMA)) expressed his concern with respect to disaster recovery, not as far as what RIEMA is doing, but what is Motorola doing. He further noted that Jack Landers, along with Tom Guthlien (RIEMA) had a concern relative to what Motorola currently does, or what they can or will do if the master site fails? It was noted Brian Swann (Motorola) was brought in and gave a 45 minute presentation to Jack Landers (RI DoIt), Tom Guertin (RIEMA), and Tony Lupinacci (RI DoIt) on exactly what Motorola does and options (meaning things we consider putting into our operating or capital budget). Executive Director McDonald inquired if Brian Glancy (RIEMA) was comfortable releasing that document, which he was.

Budget and Capital Sub-Committee:

Not heard.

Executive Director McDonald mentioned she received a call House Finance indicating they have entered into negotiations with the Colonel, Attorney General around Google funding. She further states she makes no commitment on what they are interested in helping with, but was asked to provide them with a "wish" list. Executive Director McDonald indicated the wish list was provided with repeaters, HPC units, generators, etc. and broke them down further by priority. It was noted these materials would be circulated.

Compliance & Customer Service:

Not heard.

Training and Education:

David Schnell (LifeSpan) indicated they have been in contact with Colonel Clements of Providence Police, and will work with Joe, to present the PowerPoint to their recruits. He further stated that per Tom he expects the COML and COMT programs should be up and running by mid-August or September. Also, there is a one (1) hour slot at 1:00 on June 20, 2014, for the Hurricane Conference regarding communications. David Schnell (LifeSpan) also indicated they will have to meet again to see what their next steps are.

Gina Caruolo, on behalf of Sam Adams (RI Department of Health), indicated previously during his training module there was some talk about getting some local photos from RIEMA or Motorola. Executive Director McDonald acknowledged she was to provide the local photos and stated she would have Armand Randolph (RIEMA) follow-up with him, as well as acknowledge her agreement with launching it.

Executive Director McDonald spoke briefly about the Hurricane Conference on June 20, 2014. She went on to detail what the conference will entail, including all phases of emergency management, polling, session on ICC/SCIP, as well as a panel discussion regarding rolling out the SCIP and training modules available.

Policy:

Executive Director McDonald questioned whether a new sub-committee had been appointment at this time and that she needed to follow-up with the National Guard. Peter Ginaitt (LifeSpan) added that we had been waiting due to the rolling out of the SCIP. Executive Director McDonald stated it was time for her to sit with all the sub-committee chairs to reevaluate.

New Topics:

With respect to the EMPG13 rollout, Executive Director McDonald expressed that one of their commitments with the new SOPs, new SCIP – was how to award funding to the applications that relate to technology? David Eaton (RIEMA) had reached out to several people on the ICC, not necessarily asking for funding, in order to have those members perform the initial review on any grants that have technology-related requests. They would then determine whether they are in compliance with the SCIP and meet all of our technical standards (first level review). Once this first level review is complete our internal review team would then prioritize the projects. Executive Director McDonald generally reviewed what the review process would consist of and ultimate outcome of the requests.

Peter Ginaitt (LifeSpan) states he had heard that the XTS for the 1500s will no longer be supported by Motorola and will be phased out. It was noted the manufacturing will be ending sometime at the end of this year and will be supported for an additional five (5) years. A discussion took place that this is the biggest product sold in Rhode Island (assuming), and as to what that will look like in years two (2) and three (3). Executive Director McDonald questioned if there was a way to track on our system how many are 1500s by our data? It was confirmed that it could be tracked. There was a question of the inventory and how redistribution may be handled regarding repossessed or decommissioned inventory.

Joe Baker (RIDOT) made mention of the recent Air Show and how well it went. He went on to say there have been some discussions about completing an after-action report. Executive Director McDonald noted that she has attempted this with the National Guard, but has not been invited to date. She did go on to state that RIEMA tracks their comments, but that she was not opposed to posting one. It was mentioned there were some traffic management issues due to the National Guard shutting down roads which could be addressed. Executive Director McDonald indicated she would follow-up with this issue.

Gil Woodside (RIEMA) noted that Motorola will be doing multiple upgrades starting on June

16th, they have a very aggressive plan to do the complete system upgrades. Brian Swann (Motorola) indicated they have been planning this upgrade for approximately six (6) months. He went on to state there are a couple of times that this upgrade will impact everyone which may include short periods of interruption in service which may last for approximately five (5) minutes. Executive Director McDonald suggested an aggressive communication (memo) be distributed to EMA directors, fire and police chiefs, and anyone else affected. Executive Director McDonald also confirmed with Brian Swann (Motorola) that a back-up plan was in place in case something did not go properly. She also suggested this be included in the communication. It was agreed Brian Swann (Motorola) will distribution the communication (memo). Peter Ginaitt inquired about an ICC portal and it was noted this is being worked on for just such situations. It was also asked by Executive Director McDonald what the mechanism was in place for people to call when they see something that needs to be distinguished if a real problem exists. She suggested that information be put into the communication as well.

Executive Director McDonald stated there was no move on the minutes so they will be added to the agenda for next month and voted on.

With all business concluded, Executive Director McDonald stated made a motion to adjourn and the motion was seconded and passed.

Meeting adjourned at 11:05 AM.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday August 5, 2014 at 10:00 AM at the Rhode Island Department of Transportation, 360 Lincoln Avenue, Warwick, Rhode Island 02888.